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Sustainable Indianness Through Indian Knowledge System (IKS)

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"Nahi Jnaanena Sadrusham Pavitra miha Vidyate" - Gita. (4-38)

Abstract:

Sustainability of Indian Culture is the need of the hour. NEP-2020 prioritised Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in Higher Education. India, as it is called *Vishwa Guru,* once illuminated the ancient world by acting as a shining land of knowledge. Structured Questioning about creation, meaningful engagement with Nature, ethical building of the society, evolved living with reasonable technology and establishing an effective spiritual connection with cosmos are the pillars of ancient Indian Knowledge System. It attracted learners, thinkers and critics around the world for knowledge dissemination and exchange. Universities like Nalanda and Thakshasila played a predominant role in the development of the content, educational delivery and preservation of the knowledge. Unfortunately, foreign invasions destroyed India's wealth of knowledge, breaking the link of proper transfer of knowledge to the after generations. This impacted the thought process and attitudes of current generations about the ancient heritage image of India. The crux of the problem is the most misunderstood Vedic knowledge, making it controversial through political, societal undermining. Colonial impact and its improper projection of Indian knowledge Systems caused significant damage to the Indian as well as world intellectual community. NEP-2020 noticed this chronic issue which can damage the respect of the country and took the responsibility to inculcate the dynamics of the Indian Knowledge system to future generations. There is a dire need to build a nation which can recognise, study and preserve its own treasure of knowledge and proudly transmit it to the future world.

INTRODUCTION:

'Vikasit Bharath' is the vision to make India a developed nation holistically by 2047. One of the major goals is to empower the youth which is a priority part of Four Pillars. Unfortunately, Youth today deteriorate themselves through various unwanted lifestyles and attitudes. They are even enjoying degrading the Indian heritage and knowledge contribution to world evolution. Their mindsets are to be changed so that they respect their nation and its rich knowledge. To attain it, laying an effective basic structure is essential. Sustainability of Indian Culture is the need of the hour. NEP-2020 prioritised Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in Higher Education.

"Bharat" refers to the ancient undivided India which covered the extreme parts Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Geographically it was called as 'Akhanda Bharat'. The derivation of the name 'Bharat' also has various versions.

COLONIAL IMPACT:

Sustainability of Indianness is damaged by many factors. Loose translations of Indian scriptures into English damaged the entire elated picture of philosophy. For example, the word *Maya* is loosely translated into English as "Illusion". But in Advaita Vedanta tradition, it is the cause of 'illusion'and not illusion per se. Likewise the word *Kama* is translated as sexual pleasure. But as per the *Nitivakyamitra* by Jain scholar Somadeva Suri, '*abhimanika-rasanuviddha yatah sarvendiya-pritih'* means Kama is that which grants gratification abounding in bodily sentiment to all senses. This is a very broad concept which can never be captured by a narrow word like 'Lust'. This is how Vedas or other scriptures were misinterpreted. It is the complete elimination of several different meanings from different branches of Indic knowledge systems

that is achieved by mistranslating most of the words.

METHODOLOGY:

As Geetha (5-18) says *"Pandithaha Samadarshinaha"* The people with knowledge see everything with equal distance.

- This paper tries to highlight the Timelessness of our Indian Knowledge System comprising the Vedas or other scriptures and discusses the adoptable concepts to disseminate to the student community through curriculum.
- For this purpose, evaluating elements like Universality, Rationality, Aptness and Usefulness to current society are taken into consideration.
- Also, this paper tries to derive contextual broad meaning rather than textual bare direct meaning without deviating the essence.
- Indian Knowledge System is vast covering various fields like Mathematics, Medicine, Astronomy etc. but this paper confined to the scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, Narada Sukta, Vidura Sukta, Koutilya's Arthasastra, and Bagavat Geetha for this study.

VEDAS - EDUCATION:

Vedas originated through discussion between a Teacher who got the knowledge by deep concentration and understanding and the student who questioned continuously to get better understanding and knowledge. Our scriptures showed the models how a teacher should be and how a student should be. Role of Brahmin: *Adyaapanmadhyayanam …. (Manu. 1.88), Jnaanam Vijnaanamaastikyam Brahma karma Swbhaavajam* || (Geetha 18.42). Brahman is the role of a teacher. One of the important roles is that he should teach and learn continuously.

Hiranyagarbhah samavarttatagre bhutasya batah patireka asit|
Sa dacara prithim dyamuke mam kasmai devaya haviya vidhema || *(Yaju. A. 13 man.4)*

The Divine Power who is refulgent by nature and who possesses all the luminous worlds within Himself and existed before the creation of this world and form the very eternity is the only one conspicuous and animate Lord of all the created objects. He is sustaining this earth and the Sun etc. to that All-blissful Divinity we offer our humble worship with attainable yogic concentration and devotion.

Agnimle purohitam yajnasya devamrtvijam | Hotaram ratnadhatamam || (Ruk. 1-1-1) I describe the attributes of Self-refulgent Divinity who is upholder of the universe from very eternity the illuminator of all activities and the sole object of adoration in all seasons, the most Bounteous and the great possessor of shining wealth.

Swasti No mimitamasvaina bhagah svasti devyaditirananrvanah |
Svasti pusa asuro dadhatu nah svasti dyavarprthivi sucentuna || (Ruk. 5-51-11) O Great Lord May the teacher and preacher by Thy grace be engaged to do our good: may the science of electricity be for our prosperity when we are deprived of other means of conveyance, may the cloud with its protective power bestow prosperity upon us, may the heaven and earth being the source of all sciences be for our prosperity.

Svasti mitravarunaa svasti padye revathi |
Svasti Na indraschagnischa svasti No Adite Krudhi || (Ruk. 5-51-14) O Indivisible Divine Power, Please give me all prosperity may the forces of worldly integration and disintegration be, for our prosperity, may the all-powerful air and electricity be for our benefit, and may there be pleasure for us in the way of prosperous life.

Tam isham jagatas tasthushas patim dhiyam jinvanam huve vayam | Pusha no yatha vedasam asad vridhe rakshita payur adabdah svastaye || (Yaju. 25-1) For our protection we adore Him who is the master of the world that moves and that moves
not, He is sthe inspirer of our intellect, just as He is our sustainer so as He being protector of our phusical and spiritual wealth and guardian to save us from calamities, be our saviour for our progress and prosperity.

Svasti na indro vriddhashravah | *svasti nah pusha vishvavedah* |
Svasti nas tarkshyo arishtanemih | *svasti no brihaspatir dadhatu* || (Yaju. 25-19) May the almighty lord commendable by all be for our prosperity, May the All-sustaining Omniscient Lord be for our prosperity, May the All-impelling merciful Divine be for our prosperity, may the master of speech and physical forces vouchsafe us prosperity.

During Vedarambah the student prays the teacher:

Om amne su-shravah ma kuru | *Om Yatha tvamne su-shravah su-shrava asi* | *Evam ma kuru su-shravah* | *Omyatha tvamne devanam yajnasya nidhih asi* | *Evam aham manushyanam vedasya nidhih bhuyasam* ||

(Krishna Yajur. Taittarey Aranyk. Parishista. Kanda 21, Kandika 42) O famous Acharya, please make me earn fame in the field of education. O Acharya, as you are enjoying prominence and are highly learned so you make me enjoy prominence and become highly learned. O Acharya as you among the learned men, are the preserver of the treasure of knowledge. So I become amongst them.

Yanyanavadyani karmani | *tani sevitavyani noitarani* |
Yanyasmakam sucaritani | *tani tvayopasyani no itarani* |
Ye ke casmachareyamso brahmanah |
Tesam tvayasanena prasvasitavyam || (Taittiriyo.1.11.2)

O disciple, you do attend to and follow only those acts which are unblamable, sinless i.e free from injustice and unrighteousness and concordant with justice and righteousness and do not follow the acts otherwise contaminated with unrighteousness. You do take into action and attend to only those acts of your Acharya, mother and father like us which are right, true and full of righteousness and you never translate into action those acts of ours which are bad and blameworthy.

"Saha navavatu saha nau bhunaktu saha viryam karavavahai|
Tejasvina vadheetamastu mavidvisavahai||" (Kenopanishad.) Let the divine protect our ability and brilliance and let us flourish together. This shows the importance of the bonding between a teacher and a student in the teaching-learning process.

SCIENTIFIC and RATIONAL:

In ancient times there might not have been advanced technical tools for research but their powerful dedicated observation of the natural world had given them rational viewpoints about the creation of the cosmos which can match today's studies.

Om purnamadah, purnamidam purnat purnamudacyate|
Purnasya purnamadaya purnamevavasisyate om shanti shanti shanti hi|| (Eesavyashopanishad) the completeness of creation or universe comes from completeness. This means that the entire universe is vast. All parts of the universe are part of that one Completeness. This verse clearly indicates that the Rishis who tried to study the origin and creation of the entire universe, got almost the scientific truth which now proved with evidences.

Tadejati tannaijati taddure tadvantike|
Tadantarasya sarvasya tad sarvasyasya bahyatah - (Eesavyashopanishad) That moves on and does not move, far and near, inside and outside of the universe. This is the comprehensive viewpoint how they visualised the cosmos.

"Na Tatra Suryobhathi na Chandratarakam | nema Vidyuto bhanti kuto yamagnihi | Tameva bhanta manubhati Sarvam | tasya bhasaa Sarvamidam Vibhati || (Svethasvataropanishad. 6-14). In those ancient times they managed to think that the Light from the Sun cannot illuminate the entire universe, even the light of the Sun is derived from the Almighty force. This is true as per scientific knowledge.

INCLUSIVITY:

In Aapasthambha Dharma Sutra (2. 5.11.10.11), the movement between Varnas is described. According to that Varna is decided not by the birth but by the Conduct. *dharmacaryayā jaghanyo varṇaḥ pūrvaṃ pūrvaṃ varṇamāpadyate jātiparivṛttau || 1 ||*
adharmacaryayā pūrvo varṇo jaghanyaṃ jaghanyaṃ varṇamāpadyate jātiparivṛttau || 2 || śūdro brāhmaṇatāmetati brāhmaṇaścaiti śūdratām |

The Shudra of good quality, action and culture rises to the status of Vaishya, Kshatriya and Brahman varnas and adopts and practises their respective rights and action. Equally the Brahmans or Kshatriyas or Vaishyas of evil quality, act and culture may fall down to the status of Shudra.

"Aachaarah kulam aakhyati desham aakhyati bhaasanaa,
Sambharamah-sneham-aakyaati vapuraa khyaati bhojanam" (Koutilya Arth Shastra. 3-2)
Through His actions only his caste is decided, his status through his speech, his love through respect he shows, and his health through the food he eats.

MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIP:

oṃ dhruvā dyaurdhruvā pṛthivī dhruvaṃ viśvamidaṃ jagat | (Mantrabrahmana 1.6.6) says 'Constant is the Cosmos, constant is this universe. Like that our relationship should be constant and stable.
SELF-HELP or VALUES: Western and European knowledge and philosophies are romanticised these days for Self-help. But the Indian Knowledge System is the comprehensive and impactful in boosting the morale and guiding in life of the human resources.

"*Ashaantasya kutaha Sukham?*" (Geeth. 2-66). This clearly confirms that the person without calmness in mind cannot enjoy any comfort.

"*Satvaat Sanjaayate Jnaanam*" (Geetha. 14-17) declares that Soft-nature helps in gaining knowledge.

"*Yadyadaacharati Sreshta stata devetaro janaha*|
sa yatpramanam kurute Lokastadanuvartate" (Geetha. 3-21). World follows a well behaved learned person's footsteps.

COMMUNICATION SKILL:

"*Abhyavahati Kalyanam Vividham Vak Subhashita | Saiva Durbhashitaa Rajannanardhaayopapadyate* ||
(Vidura Neethi. 77) A well spoken word gives prosperity and peace whereas a bad word leads to all evils.

"Samniyachati yo vegam Utdhitam Krodhaharshayoh|
Sa Sriyo Bhajanam Rajan Yaschapatsu na Muhyati || He who can control his anger and happiness can earn wealth and doesnt get into troubles.

RESILIENCE:

These days youth are sensitive to problems and preferring to end life. Indian Knowledge System is a solution which can build resilience through powerful verses. *"Vayuranilamamritamathedam bhasmantam sariram*| *Krato smara Kritam Smara."* (Eeshavyaso.) let the prana merge into universal prana. Let the body turn into Ashes, Just remember what you have done and remember what you have to do.
"Anirvedam cha dakshyam cha manasa scha aparajyayaha|
Kaya siddi karanyahuhu thamadethath bravimi aham || *(Ramayana 4-49-6)* It tells us to look up to the challenges rather than succumb to them.
LOVE: "Guna rahitam kaamanaarahitam pratikshana vardhamana mavichinnam suksmataram Anubhavarupam" (Narada Sukta. 54) Love is desireless, selfless. Love is the tendency to unite, to become one.

ETHICS:

Ma gridhah kasysviddhanam- (Eesavyashopanishad) - Dont steal or covet others possessions.

ESSENCE OF LIFE:

"Pragnaanam Brahma" (Aitareyam.3-1-3 Rigveda), *"Aham Brahmasmi"* (Brihadaranyaka 1-4-23 Yajurveda), *"Tatvamasi"* (Chandogya. 6-8-7 Samaveda), "*Ayamaatma Brahma*" (Mandukya. 1-2. Adarvana Veda). These are the timeless verses around which the entire human philosophy revolves. This

is the gist of true knowledge. It proposes and concludes Oneness. Awareness or Soul or Self whatever maybe the words that entity is one residing every body with life.

"Satyam maataa pita jnaanam dharmo bhrata daya svasa|
Santih patni kshama putrah sadete mama bandhavah || ((Koutilya Arth Shastra. 12-10) Truth is the mother, knowledge is the father, Dharma is the brother, Peace is the wife, Forgiveness is the son and all these are our Relatives. This shows the harmonious model of Living.

CONCLUSION:

Sustainability of Indianness can be achieved through IKS in Higher Education. Indian Knowledge System should be given weightage in academics without diluting the spirit of Vikasit Bharat. By adopting the Indian Knowledge System into curriculum and taught as part of every subject, not only the Vikasit Bharat goals are achieved, but also the quality of life of the individuals improves. For that the educated and knowledgeable should stand in the front line and lead the young generations to the noble cause of Vasudaika Kutumbam.

" Sa Tarathi Sa Tharathi Sa Lokaamstaarayathi" (Narada Sukta. 50)

Be Enlightened Be Enlightened and Enlighten the World.

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